



Town of Rowe
Board of Selectmen Minutes
Thursday, April 14, 2022–6:00 p.m.
Rowe Town Hall – Hearing Room 1
and Via Remote Participation

Board of Selectmen: Chair Charles Sokol, Vice-Chair Joanne Semanie, Selectman Ed Silva
Present: Executive Secretary Janice Boudreau
Audience: Hannah Poplawski, Laurie Pike

Call to Order: Chair Sokol called the meeting to order at 6:01 P.M.

Announcement of recording devices- One

Noteworthy Announcements- It was noted that two residents passed away recently, longtime resident Jane Stetson formerly of Hazelton Road and Stanley Zielonka formerly of Old Cyrus Stage Road.

6:00pm Appointment: Hannah Poplawski re: Mahican-Mohawk Trail

Hannah Poplawski, Rowe's Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership (MTWP) Representative, outlined a proposal for a grant application to be split evenly between Heath and Rowe. The grant would provide a feasibility study would to review how to extend the Mahican-Mohawk Trail which now extends from Catamount Forest in Colrain to Heath and to extend it through Rowe. The grant application deadline is coming up soon.

MOTION TO SUPPORT GRANT: Chuck Sokol made a motion to support the grant application for Rowe to join with Heath for a feasibility study to extend the Mahican-Mohawk Trail from Heath through Rowe. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

Hannah Poplawski left the meeting at 6:18 pm.

Unforeseen Business (within preceding 48 hours):

Laurie Pike joined the meeting via remote participation at 6:18 pm

Park Commission Chair Laurie Pike asked Selectmen to consider supporting a grant application for FY23 for trailblazes, and lumber for boardwalks for the lake trail in sections to prevent erosion, and professionally designed weatherproofed boards for the kiosks and informational maps. It would complete the work of a prior grant work. In addition, there would be a \$1900.00 charge for Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) to perform the procurement for the MTWP \$20,000 grant.

MOTION TO SUPPORT GRANT: Chuck Sokol made a motion to support the application for Rowe to seek funding through the Mohawk Woodlands Partnership Implementation Grant through the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

Laurie mentioned that there is another grant in the planning stages and that Rowe was asked to be the lead community in a multi-faceted Municipal Vulnerability Grant that would offer resources, training and education in new forest management practices and provide internships for a few individuals. There were several agencies

involved including MA Audubon and NE Forestry Foundation. Executive Secretary and Laurie have attended several meetings about the grant and more information would be coming soon.

Laurie Pike left the meeting at 6:30 pm.

Minutes:

Board of Selectmen Minutes of April 4, 2022:

MOTION TO ACCEPT: Chair Sokol made a motion to accept the Board of Selectmen Minutes for April 4, 2022, as written. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0).

Ongoing Projects:

Policy Updates and Review:

- Police Policies Review Submissions

MOTION TO DELAY: Chair Sokol made a motion to delay approving the police policies until further review and editing. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

Selectboard Business:

New Business:

FY23 Annual Town Meeting Warrant Review:

Board members reviewed the Annual Town Meeting Warrant Draft. There was discussion about the Board of Health's decision not approve having Town Meeting at the school. It was decided to invite them to meet together next Wednesday, April 20, 2022 to discuss in greater detail.

The Board reviewed the draft warrant.

MOTION TO APPROVE: Chair Sokol made a motion to approve the Warrant Articles 5, 6 and 7 on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

There was discussion about the Legal Fund and whether individual departments should have access to legal and how that should be done. There has been discussion about the having a gatekeeper for access and not have individuals. It was agreed that each occasion that a legal Vote as a committee, should vote on it first then present it to the Board of Selectmen.

MOTION TO ADD ARTICLE 8: Chair Sokol made a motion to add the following Article:

To see if the Town will vote to aggregate all funds appropriated for legal expenses, excluding Assessors Consultant/Legal Support, to one combined Town Legal Expense Account or take any action in relation thereto.

The motion, seconded by Selectman Silva, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

MOTION TO APPROVE: Chair Sokol made a motion to approve the Warrant Articles 9 through 20 on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

There was discussion about Article 21 and the proposal of the Finance Committee to pay Franklin Regional Retirement an additional \$25,000. Executive Secretary contacted the Director who said that the members voted in 2014 not to allow overpayment. Janice Boudreau said that the Finance Committee Chair recommended that if the additional funds were not accepted, that another retirement board should be sought. Following discussion, the Board did not agree with the Finance Committee's recommendation.

MOTION TO NOT RECOMMEND: Chair Sokol made a motion not to support overfunding the Franklin Regional Retirement an additional \$25,000.00 in Article 21 presented by the Finance Committee. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie, was unanimously accepted. (vote:3-0-0)

There was discussion about the financial articles presented by the Finance Committee or Articles 22, 23, and 24. The Board concluded that they could not be in support of the Articles as they were presented as they were not in agreement with the way they were worded.

MOTION TO SUPPORT ARTICLE 25: Chair Sokol made a motion to add Article 25 to see if the town will vote to transfer a 75% of remaining un-allocated Free Cash to the Stabilization Fund and 24% of remaining un-allocated Free Cash to the OPEB Stabilization Fund, or take any action in relation thereto. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

MOTION TO SUPPORT ARTICLES 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30: Chair Sokol made a motion to support the non-financial Articles, 26,27,28,29 and 30. The motion, seconded by Selectman Silva, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

ATM/STM Date, Location and Time:

The Board discussed the Annual Town Meeting and collectively agreed that the meeting could take place at the Rowe Elementary School. It was agreed to set up a meeting with the Board of Health to discuss further before finalizing.

Beautification Appointments:

Executive Secretary said that Cindy Stetson had two new volunteers for the Beautification Committee.

MOTION TO APPOINT: Chair Sokol made a motion to appoint Dawn Beaumier and Myra Carlow to the Beautification Committee. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie, was unanimously accepted. (vote:3-0-0)

Request for Letters of Support – FRCOG re: Police Reform & On-Call & Volunteer Pagers:

Letters of support were requested from the Emergency Preparedness Planner of FRCOG to secure funding from the state to cover unfunded Police Report mandate requiring all part-time police officers be trained as full-time officers. Also, to send a letter of support for the purchase of public safety voice pagers for our county's on-call volunteer departments.

MOTION TO SUPPORT: Chair Sokol made a motion to sign and send letters of support to secure funding for the required police training and for the funding for voice pagers for on-call volunteer departments. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie, was unanimously accepted. (vote:3-0-0)

Warrants/Contracts:

Review Warrants FY22W21 and FY21PW21:

Vice-Chair Semanie reported reviewing the Warrants and had nothing to report.

Dam Inspection Proposal:

Executive Secretary reported that the town received an extension to perform the required 5-year dam inspections for the Mill Pond and Pelham Lake Dams. She received a proposal from Lenard Engineering and did not receive one from C.D. McGuire as they had promised.

MOTION TO ACCEPT PROPOSAL: Following review and discussion, Chair Sokol made a motion to accept The proposal to inspect Mill Pond and Pelham Lake Dams for the amount of \$7800.00. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie, was unanimously accepted. (vote:3-0-0)

Executive Secretary/Administrative Assistant Updates:

Executive Secretary Updates:

Janice Boudreau reported that Administrative Assistant Debbie Cavalier started work and it was going very well.

Citizen Comments: None

Future Meetings: Next Meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 20, 2022 with the Board of Health.

Adjournment:

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Chair Sokol made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie, was unanimously accepted. (vote: 3-0-0)

Respectfully Submitted,

Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary

Approval Date:

Approved:



Chuck Sokol, Chair

Ed Silva, Selectman



Joanne Semanle, Vice-Chair

Documents:

1. Agenda April 14, 2022
2. Board of Selectmen Minutes of April 4, 2022
3. Support Letters re: Police Reform & On-Call & Volunteer Pagers
4. FY23 ATM Warrant
5. FY23 STM Warrant Draft
6. Proposal Dam Inspection Lenard Engineering
7. Executive Secretary Updates

Mail:

1. Franklin Land Trust re: D2R2
2. Email Emily Caruso – Office of Dam Inspections
3. Support Letter Requests – FRCOG re: Police Reform & On-Call Volunteer Pagers